

Abstract

The Wright brothers' long and expensive legal defense of their patent was understandable, but damaging to both the brothers and the fledgling American aviation industry. Orville and Wilbur Wright believed that, as the inventors of the airplane, they were owed recognition and financial reward. The Wrights' attempts to enforce this through legal means prevented them from making further advances in aeronautics, and frustrated the normal course of invention and improvement promoted by the patent system.